



Statement of The Insurance Association of Connecticut

Labor and Public Employees Committee

March 15, 2022

SB 422 – An Act Concerning the Essential Workers Covid-19 Assistance Program

Senator Kushner, Representative Porter, Senator Sampson, Representative Arora and members of the Labor & Public Employees Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in opposition to SB 422.

The IAC is a state-based trade association representing Connecticut's property and casualty insurance industry and Connecticut's life insurance and financial security industries. Among other insurance-related products, IAC members provide Connecticut consumers and businesses homeowners insurance, auto insurance, workers' compensation insurance, liability insurance, group benefits, life insurance, annuities, retirement plans, long-term care insurance, disability income insurance, and reinsurance.

The insurance industry is one of the most important industries in the state and is vital to Connecticut's economy. The industry is also one of the state's largest employers.

SB 422 expands the benefits under the Connecticut Essential Workers COVID-19 Assistance Program, established in Public Act 21-2 and codified in section 31-900, to provide 80 hours of paid sick leave to all employees who were unable to work due to the employee's need to self-isolate due to experiencing symptoms of, being diagnosed with, or being exposed to COVID-19. Subdivision (3) of subsection (o) of Section 1, on line 243, states "[t]he first eighty

hours of paid sick leave shall come from the employee's employer. Any amount surpassing eighty hours may be requested" from the fund.

This bill significantly expands paid sick leave to all employees, not just essential workers, under the guise of the COVID-19 program, and unfairly requires Connecticut's employers to bear the financial weight of COVID-19 related absences. This will further increase costs to Connecticut employers at a time when they are already experiencing significant pandemic-related workforce challenges and increased operating costs.

We urge the committee to reject SB 422. Thank you for your consideration.